

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner noted that claims 14-17 are pending in the application, that claim 14 is rejected, and claims 16-17 are objected to. Applicants note that claim 15 was canceled in a previously filed Response. By this Response, claims 14, and 16 are amended; and claim 17 continues unamended. In view of the following discussion, the Applicants submit that none of the claims now pending in the application is subject to a double patenting rejection or objectionable. Thus, the Applicants believe that all of these claims are now in allowable form.

DOUBLE PATENTING REJECTION

The Examiner rejected claim 14 as being an obviousness type double patenting rejection in view of claims 8 and 9 of U.S. Patent No. 6,547,502. The Applicants have filed herewith a Terminal Disclaimer. As such, the Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the double patenting rejection of claim 14.

OBJECTIONS TO THE CLAIMS

The Examiner indicated that claims 16 and 17 contained allowable subject matter and that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of the claims from which they depend. Applicants submit that claim 14 is allowable (i.e., the double patenting rejection is now moot) and that claims 16 and 17 should be allowed without amendment into independent form. As such, the Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to these claims.

In addition, the Applicants have amended claims 14 and 16 to clarify that the first spreader member and the second spreader member each respectively spread the lead edge of the plastic spiral at the leading hole and the last hole of the book to be bound. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

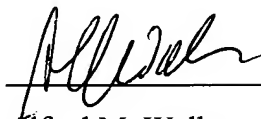
Conclusion

Thus, Applicants submit that none of the claims presently in the application are subject to a double patenting rejection or are objectionable. Consequently, the Applicants believe that all these claims are presently in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issue are earnestly solicited.

If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues requiring the issuance of a final action in any of the claims now pending in the application, it is requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned at (631) 361-8737 so that appropriate arrangements can be made for resolving such issues as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: April 27, 2004



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4-27-2004 spiel pat4 amendment